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NOTE AND COMMENT.

General Herbert's report, which we printed last week, is spoken of on all sides with the greatest favour, because of the expectation it has aroused of more activity and variety in military work next season. His advice to city corps makes it plain that for the future they will be expected to make themselves reasonably efficient in the drill laid down in General Orders, in place of devoting themselves to other movements with which perhaps the commanding officer or adjutant may be more familiar. In connection with the suggested change in the monotony of street parades, we would direct attention to the article on The New U. S. Drill Regulations, published in our issue of the 17th ult.

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With respect to the rural corps, there appears to have been a feeling of disappointment that General Herbert said nothing on the subject of the much desired annual camps, but this omission is no doubt attributable to the fact that in this Order his design was to deal only with the training of this year, reserving for another occasion suggestions for the future. It is encouraging to note that the General found the drill, as he reports it, "generally satisfactory," and the fact that he has singled out the best corps for special honourable mention will be an incentive to them to keep up in the future the good reputation thus gained. Official recognition of the good results of cadet drill, is given in his remarks on the young men from the Stratford High School. The military schools come in for credit for a good effect on officers and non-commissioned officers. The fact mentioned that the lowest standard of capacity for imparting military instruction obtains in the Fifth Military District, should emphasize the contention so often made, that the usefulness of the school at St. Johns, Quebec, is minimized by its inconvenient situation.

The artillery receive very little attention, no doubt because of the full report expected as usual from their own Inspector, to whose excellent system and care is very largely due the fact that, as General Herbert remarks, "the field batteries of artillery are generally superior in efficiency to any other arm." The cavalry receive a little attention, quite as much as they are accustomed to. As the conclusion arrived at is that "judging from the intelligence and zeal generally displayed there is reason to believe that the cavalry could be developed into a most useful force," it is fair to presume that official effort will be made to assist in this greatly to be desired development.

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The staff officers receive a fair share of criticism. We would like to see in this connection a change in the system, or lack of system, pursued in making staff appointments. Staff officers should be chosen as much as possible from corps not called out for drill, and the most capable men rather than those having the greatest "pull" should be selected.

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The publication in the General Orders of the names of those scoring highest in the musketry practice at the camps will be an incentive to keener effort in future. It is a notorious fact that the musketry practice now is very carelessly performed, there being general indifference as to the result. It is misleading, however, to describe as the "best shot in camp," the man who happened to have the most points in these class firing competitions, where more depends on chance than skill. The fact that out of the thirty names mentioned as the best shots in the respective corps, only two or three have any Provincial or Dominion reputation, supports our assertion. In the Third and Fourth Military Districts there was no rifle practice at the combined camp, the range being considered unsafe. This

suggests inquiry as to the responsibility for the choice of a site where no range was available.

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The answer to the plea for efficiency competitions, made for years past in these columns, has always been that while the idea was a good one it could not be carried out. Col. Otter, however, demonstrated its feasibility in No. 2 District last year, and this year General Herbert instituted and has had successfully carried out such a competition in connection with each camp. The published results make interesting reading. The further development of the scheme, with a comparative test between the several districts, and including city as well as rural corps, will be awaited with general interest.

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Col. Beer gives an interesting intimation, in our correspondence columns, of a new signalling system which we are sure every rifleman would like to see further explained, in practical operation, if necessary. Should it not form part of the duty of the Dominion or Provincial Rifle Associations to encourage improvements in this respect by taking official interest in such inventions, and exhibiting them to members?

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We were sorry to receive last week from an esteemed correspondent a letter in which he expressed disapproval of our new departure in the shape of an Athletic Department. He advised us to give all that space to strictly military matters of general interest, and concluded with a further protest against the generous reports given of rifle meetings, great and small. Now, lest there be others who privately speak as this officer has publicly expressed himself, we feel constrained to print a conclusion long since arrived at from the experience of this little paper. This is, that the great majority of the members of our militia force care absolutely nothing